THE STATUS OF AL-QUDS IN ISLAM

The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem
SHAYKH IKRIMA SABRI

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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‘al-Quds is not merely a city,
al-Quds is ‘*aqīda*’

Imam ʿIzz al-Dīn al-Qassām

Introduction

The work before you is an English adaptation of Shaykh Dr. Ikrima Sabri's masterpiece '*Manzilat al-Quds fī al-Islām*', translated as 'The Status of al-Quds in Islam' in an attempt to make the cream of this work accessible to the English-speaking audience. Although originally published in 2017, this work is more relevant now than ever.

It is hoped that this work is a means for many Muslims to learn more about the land regarding which the Prophet ﷺ said, **"There is not a single inch in al-Quds where a Prophet has not prayed or an Angel not stood."** (al-Tirmidhī) amongst countless other virtues which the author details throughout the book.

The author has remained steadfast upon the cause of Masjid al-Aqṣā, even at his current age of 85. Most recently, his home was raided by the occupation's police who took him for several hours to question him, placing a ban on him from entering Masjid al-Aqṣā. May Allah protect him and all of the people of Palestine who are oppressed daily.

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon the Imam of all those who are steadfast in Allah's way, our master Muḥammad, the one who travelled by night from Bayt Allah to Bayt al-Maqdis.

'Allah is his protector, Jibrā'īl is his servant, the Burāq is his mount, the Mi'rāj is his voyage, the Lote-Tree of the Farthest Boundary is his station, two bows' length or nearer is his desire.'

The First Topic

The Status of Palestine in Islam

Whenever we mention the blessed Masjid al-Aqṣā, we are also referring specifically to al-Quds and generally to Palestine. Any term used in this discussion from these three names will also imply the other two, as they are all inherently linked by virtue of *ʿaqīda* (belief), *īmān* (faith), *ʿībāda* (worship), and *tārīkh* (history). There is no room to separate these names.

Allah, glorified is He, states, in *al-Isrā'*, "Glory be to Him who took His slave on a journey by night from Masjid al-Ḥarām to Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, in order to show him some of Our Signs. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing."[1] No other chapter in the Quran begins with the word "*subḥān* (glory)" except for the chapter *al-Isrā'*, indicating that Allah, Lord of the worlds, wants us to recognise that an extraordinary event has taken place, namely, the miracle of *al-Isrā' wa al-Mi'rāj* (the Night Journey and Heavenly Ascension).

It is known that miracles are a part of essential Islamic *ʿaqīda* (belief). The blessing that is mentioned in this noble verse when Allah says 'whose surroundings We have blessed' encompasses the land of Palestine from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, including the city of al-Quds.

[1] Quran, *al-Isrā'*, verse 1.

The blessing for Masjid al-Aqṣā is even more great and significant. Some of the scholars of *tafsīr*[2] held the view that this blessing extends to the entirety of *Shām* (the Levant) and even encompasses all the lands of Islam, so that any region whose people embrace Islam is included in this blessing.[3]

To clarify the status of Palestine in Islam, it is crucial to discuss the connections, rights, and relationships that bind Muslims to this land. I will briefly mention them in the form of points, which are:

1. **Connection by Belief (*ʿaqīda*)**
   The connection to Palestine by belief is represented in several aspects, including:

   - **The Miracle of *al-Isrāʾ wa al-Miʿrāj* (the Night Journey and Heavenly Ascension)**
     Our noble Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ was taken from Masjid al-Ḥarām in Makkah al-Mukarramah to the blessed Masjid al-Aqṣā in al-Quds, Palestine. He was ascended from Masjid al-Aqṣā to the Heavens until he reached *Sidrat al-Muntaha* (the Lote-Tree of the Farthest Boundary), near *Jannat al-Maʾwā* (the Paradise of Eternal Residence) as indicated in the chapter of *al-Najm*. Thus, al-Quds was the focal point of this divine miracle: to it took place *al-Isrāʾ* (the Night Journey), and from it took place *al-Miʿrāj*

[2] Writers of Quranic commentaries.
[3] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, v. 9, part 15, p. 4-5. *Itḥāf al-Akhiṣṣā bi-Faḍāʾil al-Masjid al-Aqṣā* of al-Minhājī al-Asyūṭī, p.45.

(the Heavenly Ascension). This highlights the importance of al-Quds and Palestine and elevates their rank and station.

Since the event of *al-Isrāʾ wa al-Miʿrāj* is a miracle, and miracles are part of essential Islamic belief, the connection of all Muslims to this city is a connection of belief and faith. Therefore, the presence of the people of Palestine in this land is based on an eternal divine decree that is not subject to negotiation or concession.

- **The Angel Isrāfīl and the Rock of Bayt al-Maqdis**
  Allah, glorified is He, states, "And listen on the Day when the Caller will call out from a place that is near."[4] The 'place that is near' is the Rock of Bayt al-Maqdis, where the Isrāfīl will call out for the gathering of mankind, and that is the day of rising from the graves, the Day of Judgement.[5] It is known the Day of Judgement is a part of Islamic faith and belief.

- **al-Quds: *al-Maḥshar* and *al-Manshar* (The Place of the Final Gathering and Resurrection)**
  On the Day of Judgement, the city of al-Quds will be the land of the Final Gathering and Resurrection, for

[4] Quran, *Qāf*, verse 41.
[5] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, v. 9, part 26, p. 114.

it is where mankind will be gathered and held accountable. The companion Maymūna b. Saʿd (may Allah be well-pleased with her) asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Tell us about Bayt al-Maqdis". The Messenger of Allah ﷺ elucidated, "It is the place of the Final Gathering and Resurrection. Go there and pray in it,[6] for prayer in it is equivalent to one thousand prayers in another mosque." Maymūna said, "What if I am unable to travel there?" He replied: "Send oil there for its lamps. Whoever does this, it is as if he actually went there."[7] Since the Day of Judgement is a part of faith, the connection of every single Muslim to this land is a connection of essential belief.

2. Connection by Worship (*ʿibāda*)

A. The Muslims faced Masjid al-Aqṣā in their prayer for sixteen months (one year and four months) according

[6] Sh. Muḥammad Saʿīd Ramaḍān al-Būṭī said "What is really strange, brothers, is that when al-Mustafa ﷺ has called us to perform prayer in his Masjid and Masjid al-Ḥarām, he has only showed the rewards of performing prayer in them. However, when he has talked about Masjid al-Aqṣā, he has ordered us directly to perform prayer. Both Ibn Mājah and al-Bayhaqi have related with an authentic chain of narration, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Go there and pray in it, for prayer in it is equivalent to one thousand prayers in another mosque." (*naseemalsham.com*).

[7] Narrated by Aḥmad, Abū Dawūd, Ibn Mājah and al-Bayhaqi with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain of narration (*al-Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, v. 6, p. 463 and *al-Sunan* of Imam Ibn Mājah, *h.* 1407). Translation adapted from *The Excellence of Syro-Palestine (al-Shām) and Its People: Forty Hadiths* by Gibril Fouad Haddad.

to the most reliable narrations.[8] This was from the beginning of the obligation of prayer in the heavens of al-Quds until the revelation of Allah's words: "We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Prophet], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a *qibla*[9] with which you will be pleased. So turn your face toward Masjid al-Ḥarām. And wherever you [believers] are, turn your faces toward it [in prayer]. Indeed, those who have been given the Scripture know that it is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do."[10] Thus, Masjid al-Ḥarām in Makkah al-Mukarramah became the *qibla* for Muslims, making al-Quds the first of the two *qiblas*.[11]

B. The reward for a single unit of prayer in Masjid al-Aqṣā is equivalent to five hundred units of prayer in other than it, based on the saying of our noble Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ: "The reward of prayer in Masjid al-Ḥarām over all others besides it, is a hundred thousand prayers. In my Masjid, it is a thousand prayers. In the Masjid of Bayt al-Maqdis, it is five

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[8] *Tafsīr al-Marāghī*, v. 2, p. 9-10, as well as *Nūr al-Yaqīn fi Sīra Sayyid al-Mursalīn* of Sh. al-Khudri, p. 105. It was narrated by al-Bukhāri, Aḥmad, Muslim, Abū Dawūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Mājah on the authority of the noble companion al-Barā' b. ʿĀzib (may Allah be well-pleased with him).

[9] Direction of prayer.

[10] Quran*, al-Baqara*, verse 14.

[11] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, v. 2, part 26, p. 5-13.

hundred prayers."[12] This hadith has multiple narrations that strengthen one another. It is important to note that when we mention 'Masjid al-Aqṣā', we mean the entire area of al-Aqṣā, which covers 144 dunams[13] (144,000 square metres). This does not refer only to the covered southern building (Masjid al-Qiblī) but includes all of its facilities, including Qubbat al-Sakhra (the Dome of the Rock), Mūsāllah al-Marwānī (the Marwani prayer hall), al-Aqṣā al-Qadīm (the old al-Aqṣā building), the platforms, corridors, arches, galleries, wells, pathways, courtyards, outer walls, and main gates.

C. The Prophet ﷺ also encouraged visiting Masjid al-Aqṣā for the purpose of *'ibāda* (worship) and linked it to Masjid al-Ḥarām in Makkah al-Mukarramah and to Masjid al-Nabawi in Madinah al-Munawwarah by his saying: "Do not undertake a journey, except to three Mosques: Masjid al-Ḥarām, this Masjid of mine, and Masjid al-Aqṣā."[14]

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[12] Narrated by Aḥmad, Ibn Khuzayma, al-Ṭabarānī, al-Bazzār, with a *ḥasan* chain of narration on the authority of the noble companion Abū Darda (may Allah be well-pleased with him).

[13] A measurement of area used by the Ottomans, equivalent to 1000 sqm.

[14] Agreed upon, on the authority of the noble companion Abū Saʿīd al-Khudri (may Allah be well-pleased with him). It was also narrated by Aḥmad, Abū Dawūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasāʾī and Ibn Mājah on the authority of the noble companion Abu Hurayra (may Allah be well-pleased with him).

D. Our noble Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ connected Masjid al-Aqṣā to the rites of hajj and umra by his saying: "Whoever commences hajj or umra from Bayt al-Maqdis, all of his previous sins will be forgiven."[15] The meaning of 'commences' is to begin with the *takbīr*[16] and *talbiya*[17], or to enter into the state of *iḥrām* and wear its garments.

E. For those residing in the city of al-Quds, there is the reward of being steadfast in the way of Allah, for it is an act of continuous worship. As the noble hadith states: "There shall always be a group of my Umma clearly upon the truth, subjugating their enemies. They will not be harmed by those that oppose them, nor by those who betray them, nor by any hardships that befall them until the command of Allah comes whilst they are in that state." They asked: "O Messenger of Allah, where will they be?" He replied, "In Bayt al-Maqdis, and the surrounding areas of Bayt al-Maqdis."[18]

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[15] Narrated by Abū Dawūd in his *Sunan* on the authority of the Mother of the Believers, Umm Salama (may Allah be well-pleased with her). Likewise, it was narrated by Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan* with a different wording.

[16] Proclaiming 'God is Great'.

[17] Recited by pilgrims to express their loyalty to God.

[18] Narrated by Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain of narration, and its narrators are trustworthy, on the authority of the noble companion Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī (may Allah be well-pleased with him).

3. Urban and Cultural Connection

This connection is represented by several aspects: I will mention some of them, namely:

A. The unique architecture that encompasses all of Masjid al-Aqṣā, from Masjid al-Qiblī and Qubbat al-Sakhra (the Dome of the Rock) to the arches, galleries, platforms, steps, pathways, and wells in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā, keeping in mind that the area, which covers 144 dunams, is all considered as part of Masjid al-Aqṣā.

B. The existence of hundreds of endowment (waqf), archaeological, and heritage properties dating back to the Umayyad, Abbasid, Salāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī, Mamluk and Ottoman eras, located around Masjid al-Aqṣā and in the Old City, all of which represent the Islamic urban identity.

C. The existence of dozens of mosques in the Old City of al-Quds, built in successive eras, some of which date back to the time of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allah be well-pleased with him).

D. The establishment of hundreds of centres of the noble Quran and Hadith, schools, institutes, *Zāwiyas*[19], *Ribats*, and *Tekkes* around Masjid al-Aqṣā and in the

[19] Place of spiritual retreat.

Old City, from the time of Salāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī up until the present day, affirming the cultural, scholarly and urban connection of Muslims to Palestine.[20]

4. Our Political Right

As for the political connection/right to this land, it is represented by the ʿUmari Covenant, when, the just Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allah be well-pleased with him) came to al-Quds and was received by Sophronus, the Patriarch of the Romans, in the year 15 AH (636 CE). ʿUmar signed this covenant, as did the companions: ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf, Khālid b. Walīd and Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān (may Allah be well-pleased with them). The Muslims then took over this land from the Romans and there was no one to become an heir in this land, as the Roman Empire died out.

As is already known, ʿUmar granted safety to all citizens and preserved their rights; he did not confiscate land, nor did he demolish a house, nor did he kill a person, nor did he displace a family, and nor did he obstruct a path or water. History is a testament to this, and both friends and foes bear witness. Caliph ʿUmar preserved the churches of the Christians, and at that time there were no synagogues for the Jews; if there was, he would've preserved them too.

[20] *al-Mufaṣṣal fī Tārīkh al-Quds* by Professor ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif, v. 1, p. 491-504 and the research article *Wājib al-Muslimīn Naḥw Takhlīṣ al-Quds al-Sharīf*.

We connect Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb's prayer in the courtyard of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with our right to Masjid al-Aqṣā in two ways.

When ʻUmar was in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the time for the ʻAsr prayer entered, and the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Sophronius, asked him to pray inside the church, but he refused, saying: "I fear that the people after me will claim the Muslims' right to this church." and he prayed outside the church. Later, the Masjid known as Masjid ʻUmar was built opposite the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as a symbol of Islamic tolerance towards all religions. And it is unfortunate that foreigners refer to Masjid al-Aqṣā as Masjid ʻUmar, and this is what we see on the maps used by guides and tourists, which write 'Omar Mosque', ignoring the name of Masjid al-Aqṣā.

We want to clarify that Masjid al-Aqṣā is mentioned in the Quran, and there will never be a concession regarding this name. Yes, it is the case that ʻUmar came to Masjid al-Aqṣā, just as hundreds of other companions came to the city of al-Quds, including Bilāl b. Rabāḥ, who called the azan in Masjid al-Aqṣā.

However, the name 'Omar Mosque' was not attributed to this Masjid (al-Aqṣā), except by foreigners to diminish the importance of this Masjid; the Masjid is not attributed to ʻUmar for it is Masjid al-Aqṣā, which Allah named with this

name in the event of *al-Isrā' wa al-Mi'rāj*, while Masjid 'Umar is the one besides the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Indeed 'Umar was commanded by Allah to preserve the worship of other religions, so when he came to the city of al-Quds, he preserved for the Christians the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the places of worship that belong to them.

It is not logical for Allah to command Muslims to build Masjid al-Aqṣā on top of a place of worship for the Jews. And Allah is exalted above wrongdoing; it cannot be that the name of Masjid al-Aqṣā is attributed to the Temple of Solomon. Those who claim that the Temple of Solomon exists in the area of Masjid al-Aqṣā are deluded and upon error. The Jewish emphasis that Masjid al-Aqṣā is the Temple of Solomon is incorrect and we consider it a myth![21]

And the 'naive' Muslims go along with this myth and they write in some of their historical books that Masjid al-Aqṣā was built on the Temple of Solomon! From where is this information? The Jews themselves do not know where the temple is; for their historical books speculate and say: Is it between al-Quds and Silwān? Or is it in the holy sanctuary of al-Quds? Or is it in the area of Bāb al-Sāhira? Or on Mount

[21] *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* (*Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*), v. 3, p. 60 and 608; *al-Mufaṣṣal fī Tārīkh al-Quds* by the historian 'Ārif al-'Ārif, v. 1, p. 94; and *Bilādunā Falasṭīn* by the historian Musṭafā Murād al-Dabbāgh, v. 9, p. 89-90

Zion? Or is it along the way to Jericho or in the area of Bethlehem? The Jews themselves are confused. Then they claim that Masjid al-Aqṣā is built on the Temple of Solomon. This is the greatest naivety because we do not refer back to the Quran nor do we return to our reliable sources that give us the true facts.

I see that the Temple of Solomon is a myth from two aspects: a religious aspect and a historical aspect. As for the religious aspect, Allah took the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ from Makkah to Masjid al-Aqṣā, so it is not logical for Allah to declare that Masjid al-Aqṣā is a place of worship for us at the expense of a place of worship for the Jews. Allah commands us not to destroy a church or a synagogue, and He commands us to preserve the freedom of religion and worship for the followers of other faiths. How then, can Allah command us to build al-Aqṣā on a site of the Temple?! Due to this, we do not concede that the Temple was in al-Aqṣā. The ʿUmari Covenant confirms that there was no synagogue for the Jews when the conquering of Bayt al-Maqdis happened in the year 15 AH / 636 CE; for if there had been a synagogue for the Jews at that time, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb would have preserved it, just as he preserved the churches of the Christians.

As for the historical aspect, if the Jews had been able to prove anything related to the Temple, they would have declared it. We are convinced that their historical books speculate, and speculation does not prevail over certainty. And the certain matter is that Masjid al-Aqṣā has been standing for fifteen

centuries and is visible and established. The matter which is certain doesn't cease simply by fantasy or speculation. The certain matter remains established until another certain matter comes; another certain order that is stronger than it or at least equal. So we do not accept that the Temple of Solomon, or any place of worship of Soloman, was in Masjid al-Aqṣā.

Our relationship with the Christians and the Jews is clear and can be summarised by what is mentioned in the Quran. What is mentioned about them in the Quran we believe in and what is not mentioned we are not obligated to believe. The Quran did not inform us that there is a temple, so we don't believe the claims of the Jews.[22]

Returning to the political right, we as Muslims have ruled this land since the era of the Leader of the Believers, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Then came the Umayyads, the Abbasids, the Ayyubids, the Mamluks, and the Ottomans until World War I, where we lost authority, but our properties in Palestine remained in our hands. In the year 1948 we lost a part of our lands, and in the year 1967 we lost another part. However, our religious right remains established until the Final Day.

5. Our Right in Actuality

This right is manifested in that we are steadfast; we have not relinquished our land for fifteen centuries. And our heritage,

[22] It is important for Muslims to take from the Quran and reliable sources, and not rely on the books of other religions. The Quran and Prophetic Traditions are where facts are obtained from.

our Islamic civilization, and our mosques and places of worship are present and intact; still standing. Therefore, we are here, present, and the Arab-Islamic identity has remained established to this day. But we are now threatened in this right, and attempts are underway to change the reality to another reality contradictory to our right; through the means of confiscation of land, establishment of Israeli settlements and the construction of the apartheid wall.

6. **Connection by History**

The Jebusite Arabs are among the oldest of peoples and nations to have inhabited Palestine, dating back 7500 years BC (i.e., since the Stone Age), and the stone inscriptions confirm this. No records exist of any people older than the Jebusites and the Arab Canaanites in this land. The Jebusites were the first to establish the city of al-Quds, and its original name was "Jebus," named after them. Another name for this city is 'Uru-Salem', which is a Canaanite designation meaning "City of Peace."

It is not surprising that earlier Arab migrations from the Arabian Peninsula to the Levant have been continuous since the Arab presence in the peninsula, as there are no natural barriers; neither mountains, seas, nor rivers, that separate the Arabian Peninsula from the Levant in general and the land of Palestine in particular. Consequently, migrations to and from the Arabian Peninsula were easy and feasible.

It is evident that migrations from the Arabian Peninsula to the Levant were more extensive than those from the Levant to the Arabian Peninsula because the Arabs had a pressing need for water and pasture, which were more available in the Levant than in the Arabian Peninsula.[23] Moreover, the Quran indicates that the Arab inhabitants of Palestine were present in Palestine before the prophethood of Mūsā عليه السلام, that is, before the emergence of Judaism. The sanctity of Palestine also existed before Mūsā's declaration of prophethood, as evidenced in *al-Mā'ida*, where Allah speaks through Mūsā, saying: "O my people, enter the Holy Land which Allah has assigned to you and do not turn back [from fighting in Allah's cause] and [thus] become losers."[24]

The "Holy Land" refers to Palestine. The term "assigned" implies an order and obligation, not ownership or registration, as the one who is ignorant in the Arabic language and in the *tafsīr* of the Quran may think. The meaning of this noble verse is that Prophet Mūsā عليه السلام addresses the Children of Israel, instructing them to enter the Holy Land of Palestine, which Allah commanded them to enter, warning

[23] *al-Uns al-Jalīl wa al-Khalīl* by al-ʿAllāma Mujīr al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī, v. 1, p. 8; *al-Mufaṣṣal fī Tārīkh al-Quds* by Professor ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif, p. 1-4; *Qubbat al-Sakhra al-Musharrafa wa al-Masjid al-Aqṣā al-Mubārak* by Professor ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif, p. 18; *Tarīkh al-ʿArab wa al-Muslimīn* by Muḥammad Ḥusayn ʿAlī and ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Murʿab, p. 7-8; *Bayt al-Maqdis min al-ʿAhd al-Rāshidī wa Ḥattā Nihayat al-Dawlat al-Ayyūbiyya* by Dr. Ḥammād Yūsuf; *Dalīl al-Masjid al-Aqṣā al-Mubārak*, p. 7-8.

[24] Quran, *al-Mā'ida*, verse 21.

them against rebellion and disobedience to God's command so they do not become losers.

What was the response of the Children of Israel? Allah Almighty says: “They said, "O Mūsā, indeed within it is a people of tyrannical strength, and indeed, we will not enter it until they leave it; but if they leave it, then we will enter.""[25] This means that the inhabitants of Palestine were strong tyrants, beyond their capacity to confront, and that the Children of Israel would not enter Palestine until its people left it. If they left, then they would comply and enter Palestine. Within this is an indication that the Children of Israel sought a land without a people.

When two righteous men from the Children of Israel asked for them to enter the land of Palestine, their response was again one of refusal and avoidance, as the Lord of the Worlds says: “They said, "O Mūsā, indeed we will not enter it, ever, as long as they are within it; so go, you and your Lord, and fight. Indeed, we are remaining right here.""[26] The Children of Israel insisted on not entering Palestine, using the term “ever” in their response, which conveys an everlasting denial as well as using the term “will not” twice, which also implies denial in the future.

As a result of this obstinacy, Mūsā عليه السلام turned to his Lord, as Allah mentions: “He said, "My Lord, indeed I do not

[25] Ibid, *al-Mā'ida*, verse 22.
[26] Ibid, *al-Mā'ida*, verse 24.

possess [i.e., control] except myself and my brother, so part us from the defiantly disobedient people."”[27] The divine response and the lordly decree came in His saying, glorified and exalted is He: “Then indeed, it is forbidden to them for forty years [in which] they will wander throughout the land. So do not grieve over the defiantly disobedient people."[28]

The meaning is that the Holy Land of Palestine is forbidden to that generation of the Children of Israel as a punishment for their rebellion against Allah’s commands. They would wander in the Sinai Desert for forty years.[29] We add that the term “ever” was mentioned by the Children of Israel, so they accepted this judgement upon themselves.

After this divine decree, Mūsā عليه السلام remained with his people, wandering in the Sinai desert for forty years. At the end of this period, they did not enter Palestine, rather they headed to the mountains of Moab (the mountains of Kerak and Madaba) through Wadi Araba in Jordan. Mūsā عليه السلام stood on a high hill in the mountains of Moab and saw the city of al-Quds, pained and grieved because he did not enter Palestine; because his people refrained from entering as they were fearful. The Torah states this explicitly: "Then the Lord said to him, “This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, ‘I will give it to your

[27] Ibid, *al-Mā'ida*, verse 25.
[28] Ibid, *al-Mā'ida*, verse 26.
[29] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, v. 4, p. 110-111.

descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it."[30]

This is supported by what is mentioned in the story of Mūsā عليه السلام, as is mentioned in the hadith that when the Angel of Death came to him: "He asked Allah that He bring him near the Holy Land at a distance of a stone's throw."[31] It is known that Mūsā عليه السلام did not enter the land of Palestine but passed away in the mountains of Moab in Jordan, and he expressed this by saying "at the distance of a stone's throw," meaning in a location close to Palestine when his death approached. Therefore, the topic of "the promise to Palestine," which the Jews are echoing these days, essentially ended since the time of Mūsā عليه السلام, as the Quran has mentioned the prohibition of Palestine for them due to their rebellion against the commands of Allah, exalted is He.

As for the claim that the Jews are the chosen people of God, they were tested with temptation by Him, but they rebelled time and time again. So He became angry with them, shown by His saying: "And they were covered with humiliation and poverty and returned with anger from Allah [upon them]. That was because they [repeatedly] disbelieved in the signs of Allah and killed the prophets without right. That was because they disobeyed and were [habitually] transgressing."[32] and His

[30] *Deuteronomy 34* - according to the *New International Version* translation of the Bible.

[31] Narrated by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and al-Nasā'ī, on the authority of the noble companion Abū Hurayra (may Allah be well-pleased with him).

[32] Quran, *al-Baqara*, verse 61.

saying: "They have been put under humiliation [by Allah] wherever they are overtaken, except for a covenant from Allah and a rope from the Muslims. And they have drawn upon themselves anger from Allah and have been put under destitution. That is because they disbelieved in the verses of Allah and killed the prophets without right. That is because they disobeyed and [habitually] transgressed."[33] In these two verses, Allah has imposed humiliation, degradation, and poverty upon the Children of Israel and has brought down His Wrath upon them due to their disobedience and their hostility towards the prophets, and their act of killing them.[34]

These are the most prominent connections and relationships that bind the Arabs and the Muslims to the land of Palestine, highlighting their religious, legal, and historical rights in it, and showing how Allah, exalted is He, has honoured Palestine, sanctified it, blessed it, and elevated it in its status and significance."

[33] Quran, *Āl ʿImrān*, verse 112.

[34] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, v. 1, part 1, p. 249-250, and v. 3, part 4, p. 31-32.

The Second Topic

al-Quds in the Noble Quran

Indeed, the three names—Palestine, al-Quds, and al-Aqṣā—are connected with each other, and there is no room to separate them from one another. The mention of al-Aqṣā in the verse of *al-Isrā'* also includes al-Quds and Palestine in its blessings. Shaykh al-Minhājī al-Asyūṭī states in his book, *Itḥāf al-Akhiṣṣā bi-Faḍā'il al-Masjid al-Aqṣā*, regarding the verse of *al-Isrā'*: "If there were no virtue for Bayt al-Maqdis other than this verse, it would be sufficient, because if it is blessed around it, the blessing within it is even more significant and multiplied. And when Allah Almighty intended to elevate His Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to His heavens, He made the path he took a clarification of its virtue, granting it the honour of the two houses (The Kaaba and Bayt al-Maqdis) and their nobility."[35]

To continue, the city of al-Quds and Palestine are mentioned in the Noble Quran more than twenty times with terms such as (the Holy Land, the Blessed Land, the Village), from among them:

1. **"O my people, enter the Holy Land"**. (*al-Mā'ida*, verse 21) The "Holy Land" here refers to Palestine.
2. **"And [recall] when We said, "Enter this city and eat from it wherever you will in [ease and] abundance, and enter the gate bowing humbly and say, 'Relieve us of our burdens.' We will [then] forgive your sins for you, and We will increase the doers of good [in goodness and reward]."** (*al-Baqara*, verse 58) The "city" mentioned here

[35] p. 95.

refers to the city of al-Quds, and the "gate" refers to Bāb al-Ḥiṭṭa (Gate of Forgiveness) of Masjid al-Aqṣā.[36]

3. **"And We caused the people who had been oppressed to inherit the eastern regions of the land and the western ones, which We had blessed. And the good word [i.e., decree] of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel because of what they had patiently endured. And We destroyed [all] that Pharaoh and his people were producing and what they had been building."** (*al-ʾAʿrāf,* verse 137) The "eastern regions of the land and the western ones" that were blessed refer to the Levant, and it was blessed because of the existence of al-Quds within it.[37]
4. **"And [mention, O Prophet], when it was said to them, "Dwell in this city [i.e., al-Quds] and eat from it wherever you will and say, 'Relieve us of our burdens [i.e., sins],' and enter the gate bowing humbly; We will [then] forgive you your sins. We will increase the doers of good [in goodness and reward]."** (*al-ʾAʿrāf,* verse 161) The majority of scholars of *tafsīr* agreed upon the "city" referring to al-Quds, and the "gate" referring to Bāb al-Ḥiṭṭa, which is from the doors of Masjid al-Aqṣā.[38]
5. **"And We delivered him and Lot to the land which We had blessed for the worlds [i.e., peoples]."** (*al-Anbiyāʾ,* verse 71) Meaning that Allah saved Ibrāhīm and Lūṭ عليهما السلام by their resorting to the land that was blessed by him.

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[36] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, v. 1, part 1, p. 235-238.

[37] *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* of al-Shawkānī, v. 2, p. 240; and *Muṣḥaf al-Shurūq* (*Mukhtaṣar Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*) by Muḥammad al-Muʿallim, p. 183.

[38] Its explanation was provided prior in *al-Baqara*, verse 58.

The scholars of *tafsir* indicate that the 'land' mentioned in this noble verse refers to the Levant, and it is known that the blessed and specified part is the land of the Final Gathering and Resurrection, meaning Bayt al-Maqdis.[39]

6. **"Or [consider such an example] as the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin."** (*al-Baqara*, verse 259) The 'village' here refers to the city of al-Quds or the 'Holy Land', and the meaning is the same.[40]
7. **"And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign and sheltered them within a high ground having level [areas] and flowing water."** (*al-Mu'minūn*, verse 50) The "high ground" refers to an elevated area of land. As for its location, Ibn 'Abbās said that the "high ground" is Bayt al-Maqdis, and Abū Hurayra said it is the city of Ramla in Palestine.[41]
8. **"And listen on the Day when the Caller will call out from a place that is near - The Day they will hear the blast [of the Horn] in truth."** (*Qāf*, verses 41-42) The "place that is near" is the rock of Bayt al-Maqdis, where Angel Isrāfīl will call for the resurrection from the grave, the Day of Judgement. Due to this, the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ described al-Quds as the land of the Final Gathering and Resurrection.[42]
9. **'And at once they will be above ground (*al-Sāhira*).'** (*al-Nāzi'āt*, verse 14) The linguistic meaning of '*al-Sāhira*' is

[39] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, v. 7, part 17, p. 34.
[40] Ibid, v. 1, part 1, p. 20.
[41] Ibid, v. 8, part 18, p. 19-21.
[42] Ibid, v. 9, part 26, p. 114.

the face of the earth, and its meaning in the commentaries is the location beside the mountain in Bayt al-Maqdis.[43]

10. **"By the fig and the olive and Mount Sinai, And [by] this secure city,"** (*al-Tīn*, verses 1-3) The 'secure city' is Makkah al-Mukarramah, 'the fig and the olive' is an indication towards Damascus and Bayt al-Maqdis. Qatāda said that 'Mount Sinai' is a blessed mountain in the Levant. And he also said that 'Mount Sinai' is the Masjid of Mūsā عليه السلام in the Sinai Desert in Egypt.[44]

These are a collection of noble verses from the Quran which refer to Palestine generally, and to the city of al-Quds specifically. There is no room to separate al-Quds from Palestine, nor to separate Palestine from al-Quds.

[43] Ibid, v. 10, part 30, p. 24-25.
[44] Ibid, v. 1, part 30, p. 153-155.

The Third Topic

al-Quds in the Prophetic Sunna

Just as al-Quds has been mentioned in the noble Quran, it has also been mentioned in the purified Prophetic Sunna with the name 'Bayt al-Maqdis'. Similarly, Masjid al-Aqṣā is sometimes referred to with the name 'Masjid Bayt al-Maqdis'. From amongst the noble narrations that prove this are:

1. On the authority of the noble companion Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī (may Allah be well-pleased with him). He said, **'I asked, "O Messenger of Allah, which Masjid was built first on the earth?" He said, "Masjid al-Ḥarām." I said, "Which one after?" He said, "Masjid al-Aqṣā." I said, "How long between them?" He said, "Forty years" and then added, "Wherever you may be and the time for prayer reaches you, pray, for it is the best thing to do".'** (Narrated by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, al-Nasāʾī and Ibn Mājah.)
2. **"Do not undertake a journey, except to three Mosques: Masjid al-Ḥarām, this Masjid of mine, and Masjid al-Aqṣā."** (Narrated by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Abū Dawūd, Ibn Mājah, and al-Nasāʾī, on the authority of the noble companions Abū Hurayra and Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, may Allah be well-pleased with them.)
3. On the authority of the noble companion al-Barāʾ b. ʿĀzib (may Allah be well-pleased with him). He said, **'We prayed with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ facing Bayt al-Maqdis for sixteen months, then we were directed towards the**

Kaaba.' (Narrated by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad, Abū Dawūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā'ī, and Ibn Mājah.)

4. On the authority of the noble companion Dhū al-Aṣābiʿ (may Allah be well-pleased with him). He said, 'I asked, **"O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we are tested with living after your passing. To what do you command us?" He said, "Have concern for Bayt al-Maqdis, perhaps Allah will grant you descendants who will go to it in the mornings and evenings."** (Narrated by Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī.)
5. On the authority of the noble companion Abū Umāma al-Bāhilī (may Allah be well-pleased with him). He said, **'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "There shall always be a group of my Ummah clearly upon the truth, subjugating their enemies. They will not be harmed by those that oppose them, nor by those who betray them, nor by any hardships that befall them until the command of Allah comes whilst they are in that state." They asked: "O Messenger of Allah, where will they be?" He replied, "In Bayt al-Maqdis, and the surrounding areas of Bayt al-Maqdis."** (Narrated by Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*, with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain and trustworthy narrators.)
6. On the authority of the noble companion Maymūna b. Saʿd (may Allah be well-pleased with her), the maid of the Prophet ﷺ. She said, 'I implored, **"O Messenger of Allah, tell us about Bayt al-Maqdis". The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said "It is the place of the Final Gathering and Resurrection. Go there and pray in it, for prayer in it is equivalent to one thousand prayers in another Masjid." I responded, "What if I am unable to travel there?" He replied: "Send**

oil there for its lamps. Whoever does this, it is as if he actually went there." (Narrated by Abū Dawūd, Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad, and al-Bayhaqi, with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.)

7. As for the virtue of being buried in the blessed land, there is what is mentioned in the story of the passing of Mūsā عليه السلام where he requested as the Angel of Death approached, **'My Lord, let me die in the blessed land, the distance of a stone's throw.'** (Narrated by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and al-Nasāʾī) It is known that Mūsā عليه السلام did not enter Palestine, but rather passed away in the area of Moab in Jordan. Mūsā عليه السلام expressed this by his saying (the distance of a stone's throw), meaning that he was near the land of Palestine when death came to him.
8. On the authority of the noble companion Abū Darda (may Allah be well-pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ stated, **"The virtue of prayer in Masjid al-Ḥarām is one hundred thousand times better than prayer elsewhere, prayer in my Masjid is one thousand times better than prayer elsewhere, and prayer in Bayt al-Maqdis is better than five hundred prayers elsewhere."** (Narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and al-Bazzār in his *Musnad*, he said, 'Its chain is *ḥasan'*.)
9. On the authority of the noble companion Abū Hurayra (may Allah be well-pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said, **"Only travel to three mosques: the Masjid of the Kaaba, my Masjid, and the Masjid of Īliyāʾ."** (Narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.)
10. On the authority of the noble companion Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (may Allah be well-pleased with him), the Prophet

ﷺ maintained, **"It is not for any traveller to set out on journey to any Masjid, seeking to pray within it, except Masjid al-Ḥarām, Masjid al-Aqṣā, and this Masjid of mine."** (Narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*.)

11. On the authority of the noble companion Abū Hurayra (may Allah be well-pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said, **"The traveller does not travel except to three mosques: to Masjid al-Ḥarām, to my Masjid, and to Masjid Bayt al-Maqdis."** (Narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*. It was also narrated by al-Nasāʾī in his *Sunan* and Imam Mālik in *al-Muwaṭṭā*.)
12. On the authority of the noble companion Anas b. Mālik (may Allah be well-pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said, **"A man's prayer in his house is equal (in reward) to one prayer; his prayer in the Masjid of the tribes is equal to twenty-five prayers; his prayer in the Masjid in which Friday prayer is offered is equal to five-hundred prayers; his prayer in Masjid al-Aqṣā is equal to fifty thousand prayers; his prayer in my mosque is equal to fifty thousand prayers; and his prayer in Masjid al-Ḥarām is equal to one hundred thousand prayers."** (Narrated by Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan*.)
13. On the authority of the Mother of the Believers, ʿAʾisha, (may Allah be well-pleased with her), the Prophet ﷺ said, **"Prayer in my Masjid is one thousand times better than prayer in any other Masjid, except Masjid al-Aqṣā."** (Narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*.)
14. On the authority of the Mother of the Believers, Umm Salama, (may Allah be well-pleased with her), the Prophet ﷺ

said, **"Whoever commences hajj or umra from Bayt al-Maqdis, all of his previous sins will be forgiven."** (Narrated by Abū Dawūd in his *Sunan*. Likewise, it was narrated by Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan* with a different wording.)

15. On the authority of the noble companion ʿAbd Allah b. Umar (may Allah be well-pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said **"O Allah, bless us in our *Shām*."** (Narrated by al-Bukhārī and al-Tirmidhī.) This is a prayer from the Prophet ﷺ for the land of *Shām* and it is well-known that the pearl of *Shām* is Bayt al-Maqdis.
16. On the authority of the noble companion Abū Darda (may Allah be well-pleased with him), the Prophet ﷺ said, **"O Muʿādh, indeed Allah will soon open to you the lands of al-*Shām* after me, from al-ʿArīsh to the Euphrates. Its men, women, and maidservants will remain steadfast until the Day of Judgement. So whoever from amongst you chooses an outskirt from the outskirts of *al-Shām* or Bayt al-Maqdis, then he is in a state of jihad until the Day of Judgement."** (Narrated by Ibn ʿAsākir in *Tarīkh Dimishq*, al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*, and Muttaqī al-Hindī in *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl*)
17. The Leader of the Believers, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (may Allah be well-pleased with him) made a great effort to come to Bayt al-Maqdis and to receive the keys of the blessed and sanctified city from the Patriarch of the Romans at that time, Sophronius. This was due to the importance of the city in Islam.
18. Similarly, dozens of the noble companions also made great efforts to reside in Bayt al-Maqdis, and some from amongst

them were also buried there specifically, and others were buried in Palestine generally. From amongst them notably: Rayḥāna, Dhu al-Aṣābiʿ, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ghanam, ʿUkāsha, ʿUbāda b. al-Ṣāmit, Shaddād b. Aws, and many more.

These are some of the evidences that prove the strong connection of al-Quds in the noble Prophetic Sunna. This blessed and sanctified city will remain as a haven for the hearts of millions upon millions of Muslims in every corner of the world, since the miracle of al-Isrāʾ wa al-Miʿrāj, to the present, and until the Day of Judgement, with the permission of Allah, and His Will and Assistance.

The Fourth Topic

The Aggressions and Violations of the Occupation Against Masjid al-Aqṣā

The aggressions and violations of the Israeli occupation authorities against Masjid al-Aqṣā occur in many different ways, and they occur almost daily. We will summarise them into five sections:

1. **Excavations Beneath and Around Masjid al-Aqṣā**

   After the fall of al-Quds in June 1967, the Israeli occupation authorities began excavations beneath the *Waqf* properties adjacent to the western outer wall of Masjid al-Aqṣā in areas such as Bāb al-Silsila (Chain Gate), Bāb al-Qaṭṭānīn (Cotton Merchants' Gate), Bāb al-Ḥadīd (Iron Gate), Bāb al-Majlis (Council Gate), and Bāb al-Ghawānima (Gate of Banī Ghanīm). This caused cracks to form in several historic buildings, some dating back to the Mamluk, Ottoman, and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn eras, with parts of these structures eventually being demolished. For example, the excavations led to the discovery of the Mamluk well of Qaytbay in the western courtyard of Masjid al-Aqṣā in 1981, through a water channel. The Israeli Antiquities Authority mistakenly believed that this channel was in fact a tunnel extending beneath the Dome of the Rock! However, within a few hours, it became clear that the Jewish claims were false, and what was discovered was in reality a water well, with stones dating back to the Mamluk period. The Islamic *Awqāf* department of al-Quds, in cooperation with Muslim worshippers, was able to seal the

opening created by the excavation with reinforced concrete to prevent the Jews from entering it again.

To mention some other examples:

- The historical Ottoman school in Bāb al-Qaṭṭānīn cracked in 1983 due to excavations that also led to the collapse of the stairs leading to the Islamic *Awqāf* department in Bāb al-Majlis, in 1984.
- The collapse of the corridor leading to Bāb al-Ghawānima in 1988.
- On 07/07/1996, the Israeli occupation carried out dangerous excavations that led to tremors in the southern wall of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
- In the same year, the Israeli occupation authorities opened the tunnel door underneath the Umariya Elementary School toward the north of Masjid al-Aqṣā, and this tunnel begins from Bāb al-Maghārib and runs parallel to the western wall of the compound of Masjid al-Aqṣā, then heads east under the Umariya Elementary School with a length of 290 metres. This tunnel was opened on 24/09/1996, and as a result an uprising broke out, known as the Tunnel Riots.
- On 17/02/2010, a house located near Bāb al-Nāẓir (Bāb al-Majlis), one of the external gates of Masjid al-Aqṣā, cracked as a result of the excavations of the Israeli occupation.

In addition, beneath Masjid al-Aqṣā, excavations carried out by the Jewish authorities have uncovered the foundations of the mosque by removing the surrounding soil, thereby exposing its front structure to potential danger. These excavations, concentrated on the western and southern sides of Masjid al-Aqṣā, are ongoing.[45] The Israeli occupation claims that these efforts aim to uncover ancient Hebrew artifacts and remains of the Temple of Solomon. However, no evidence or stones have been found to substantiate these fictitious claims.[46]

2. The Invasions of the Courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā

There is no doubt that the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā are a part of the Masjid itself. Extremist Jewish groups attempt to invade these courtyards from Bāb al-Maghāriba (as they have controlled its key since the June 1967 war until now) in order to perform Talmudic prayers and impose a new reality in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā. The occupation is studying the possibility of allowing Jews to pray in Al-Aqṣā until today, however the *Murābiṭūn* and *Murābiṭāt*[47], and the male and female students of knowledge, as well as the guards of the Masjid appointed by the Islamic Waqf, have been and have not

[45] Issues of the magazine *Ṣawt al-Hay'a* published by the Islamic Supreme Committee in Jerusalem, as well as the local press.

[46] With reference to the fact that the Jews do not believe that Sulaymān عليه السلام was a prophet. Rather, they deny his prophethood and consider him only a king. This confirms that the Temple of Solomon is not holy to the Jews as it is attributed to a king and not to a prophet, according to their own beliefs.

[47] The Palestinian women who are defending the holy lands.

stopped confronting these aggressive attempts, preventing any Jew from performing their religious rites in Masjid al-Aqṣā, by the Grace of Allah and His success. The invasions are many taking place every day and difficult to keep count of, however they have been mostly thwarted.[48]

3. Determining the Ages of Worshippers

The police of the Israeli occupation have been placing limits on the ages of the Muslim worshippers who are allowed to enter Masjid al-Aqṣā, so that only those who are aged 50 and over are allowed to enter on Fridays and during the various Jewish holidays. These measures are unheard of by world countries, confirming that Israel is an occupying and illegitimate authority, not a sovereign one. Moreover, everyday the Israeli army prevents Palestinian citizens from entering al-Quds, depriving them of prayer in Masjid al-Aqṣā.[49]

4. Military and Armed Attacks on Masjid al-Aqṣā

To reference the most dangerous of them:

1. The first military Zionist invasion of Masjid al-Aqṣā was on Wednesday, 07/06/1967, which was led by Mordechai Gur in a half-track vehicle that entered the

[48] The magazine *Hudā al-Islām* published by the Jerusalem Islamic Waqf, as well as the local press.

[49] The magazine *Ṣawt al-Hay'a* published by the Islamic Supreme Committee in Jerusalem, as well as the local press.

courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā. The first Friday prayer in Masjid al-Aqṣā was disrupted on 09/06/1967.

2. The seizure of control over the key to Bāb al-Maghāriba (which is from the external gates of Masjid al-Aqṣā) by the Israeli occupation army immediately after the occupation of al-Quds in 1967. This was so they could control the entry of Jews whenever they wished. This led to a lack of ability of the Islamic Waqf to control the management of Masjid al-Aqṣā, and the key has not left the possession of the Israeli army to this day.
3. The Israeli occupation army took control of the al-Tankiziyya School in July 1969 and continues to do so until now. The school is considered one of the historical and archaeological buildings that dates back to the Mamluks. It was used as a religious school under the name 'Al-Aqṣā Sharīʿa Secondary School', and it is located on the western wall of Masjid al-Aqṣā, with its windows directly overlooking the courtyards of al-Aqṣā.
4. The gun attack carried out by Harry Goldman, a reserve soldier in the Israeli army, which led to the martyrdom of two people and the injury of more than sixty others by him and the Israeli army, which intervened to protect and rescue him. He was shortly released after his arrest!
5. A massacre by the Israeli occupation forces against the Muslim worshippers in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā on 08/10/1990, which led to the martyrdom

of 23 people and the injury of more than two hundred people.

6. Another massacre by the Israeli occupation forces against the Muslim worshippers in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā on Friday, 28/09/1996, during the Tunnel Riots, which led to the martyrdom of 14 people and the injury of dozens.
7. A third massacre by the Israeli occupation forces against the Muslim worshippers in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā on Friday, 29/9/2000, during the al-Aqṣā Intifada, which led to the martyrdom of six people and the injury of dozens.
8. On 21/03/2011 – The guards of Masjid al-Aqṣā, appointed by the Islamic Waqf, thwarted an attempt by an extremist, armed Zionist to infiltrate the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
9. The invasions of the Israeli army into the Masjid al-Aqṣā on Fridays and during the Jewish holidays, which has led to the injury of hundreds and the suffocation of thousands of Muslim worshippers due to incendiary bombs, rubber bullets, and toxic gases. It is impossible to count these invasions, and they continue to occur today.

5. Plans to Demolish or Burn Masjid al-Aqṣā

There have been dozens of attempts to demolish, burn or explode the Masjid, with the aim of establishing the alleged Temple of Solomon upon its ruins. The most dangerous of them are:

1. The fire that took place on Thursday, 21/08/1969, at the hands of the criminal Denis Michael Rohan, who was of Australian nationality. The Israeli authorities claimed him as being mentally unstable in order to absolve him, avoid trial, and close the case as usual. This confirms their participation in this crime. It is known that the fire targeted the pulpit of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī, part of the Masjid's roof, the inner dome, and burned large quantities of carpets and mats, as well as many copies of the Quran.
2. On 21/05/1980, a group of extremist Jews intended to blow up the front building of Masjid al-Aqṣā, and they were caught with a large amount of explosives in their possession after being uncovered by the Masjid's guards.
3. In 1982, another criminal plan was discovered to blow up the Dome of the Rock, carried out by a group of Zionists that included an officer from the special forces.
4. In 1983, four armed Jews were discovered with bags full of explosives, in an attempt to infiltrate the underground passage leading to the Marwani prayer hall, and the Masjid's guards were able to thwart the crime before its execution.
5. On 26/01/1984, a group of Jews attempted to enter the courtyards of the Masjid carrying three hand grenades and six bags of explosives with the purpose of blowing up the Masjid.

6. On 27/01/1984, eighteen hand grenades and ten kilograms of explosives were found near the eastern wall of the Masjid, and the infiltrators escaped through the Bāb al-Raḥma cemetery after they were discovered by the Masjid's guards.
7. A pilot from the Israeli Air Force took off with his plane equipped with missiles, targeting Al-Aqṣā Mosque in order to demolish it, but he was stopped by Israeli Air Force planes.
8. On 12/07/2000 Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron and Israel Meir Lau, two chief Rabbis, demanded the Israeli Prime Minister to impose Israeli control over Masjid al-Aqṣā.
9. On 07/08/2000, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel formed a committee to decide on the project of establishing a Jewish synagogue in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
10. On 28/09/2000, Ariel Sharon stormed the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā with the aim of establishing the alleged Temple, as a result the al-Aqṣā Intifada broke out.
11. On 25/01/2000, the Israeli professor Raphael Israeli called for the Israeli government to impose the division of Masjid al-Aqṣā between Muslims and Jews.
12. On 28/02/2000, an Israeli film was shown proposing the possibility of bombing Masjid al-Aqṣā!
13. On 21/05/2001, an engineer in the administration of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem gave a secret plan to the Israeli Prime Minister for the

construction of a synagogue in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā.

14. On 17/07/2001, an Israeli terrorist group threatened to blow up Masjid al-Aqṣā.
15. On 26/07/2004, the leader of what is called the Temple Mount Faithful called for the removal of Al-Aqṣā Mosque from existence.
16. On 29/07/2001, there was a failed attempt by the Temple Mount Faithful to bring the foundation stone of the alleged Temple into the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
17. On 04/10/2001, there was another failed attempt by the Temple Mount Faithful to bring the foundation stone into Masjid al-Aqṣā.
18. On 06/10/2001, a plan to build the alleged Temple in the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā was prepared by the Temple Mount Faithful.
19. On 16/12/2001, Jewish Rabbis demanded the Israeli Prime Minister to apply Israeli sovereignty over the courtyards of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
20. On 23/03/2002, 30 Zionist organisations were working on building the alleged Temple on the ruins of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
21. On 24/07/2004, the Israeli Minister of National Security declared that extremist Jewish groups were planning to demolish Masjid al-Aqṣā using a drone loaded with explosives or a manned suicide plane. The Islamic Supreme Committee and other Islamic bodies

issued statements condemning this criminal plan, holding the Israeli government entirely responsible.

22. Exactly one week later, on 31/07/2004, the Israeli Minister of National Security issued another statement saying, 'The Israeli government is unable to protect Masjid al-Aqṣā from extremist Jewish groups.' The Islamic Supreme Committee, the Palestine Scholars Association, and the *Dār al-Iftā*' issued further statements, holding the Israeli government entirely responsible. It was as if these extremist groups were stronger than the government! In reality, these groups could not carry out their criminal plans without the assistance of the government.
23. Another week later, on 07/08/2004, the Israeli Minister of National Security warned for the third time about the plans of extremist Jews to attack Masjid al-Aqṣā.
24. On 4/1/2005, the head of the Shin Bet stated that Jewish extremists were planning to attack Masjid al-Aqṣā.
25. On 12/07/2007, the occupation's Municipality developed a new plan for the Bāb al-Maghāriba bridge leading to Masjid al-Aqṣā.
26. On 05/02/2008, marches of extremist Jews passed through the Old City of Jerusalem, chanting hateful racist slogans, claiming their right to build the Third Temple in place of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
27. On 18/6/2009, an announcement was made of a Jewish project aimed at dividing Masjid al-Aqṣā.

28. On 20/12/2010, an extremist Jew attempted to infiltrate Masjid al-Aqṣā carrying explosives, and he was arrested.
29. On 20/02/2013, a member of the Jewish National Front explicitly spoke about the possibility of bombing the Dome of the Rock.
30. On 08/04/2013, Yehudah Glick, a member of the Knesset published a picture portraying the Dome of the Rock with its golden dome replaced with a cap worn by Jews, with Jewish slogans written on it. Glick is known to be an advocate for building the Temple on the ruins of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
31. On 05/07/2013, Uri Ariel, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, called for the construction of the Temple on the ruins of Masjid al-Aqṣā.
32. On 16/08/2013, a Jewish association obtained approval to implement a project of building a synagogue on parts of Masjid al-Aqṣā.

The author, may Allah preserve him, concludes here. Yet more than 10 years later the attacks, threats, and violations against Masjid al-Aqṣā have only increased. May Allah protect and free it and its people.

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- *The Forgotten Haram: 40 Narrations Concerning Jerusalem* by Shaykh Faheem.

سَرَيْتَ مِنْ حَرَمٍ لَيْلاً إِلَى حَرَمٍ
كَمَا سَرَى الْبَدْرُ فِي دَاجٍ مِنَ الظُّلَمِ

وَبِتَّ تَرْقَى إِلَى أَنْ نِلْتَ مَنْزِلَةً
مِنْ قَابِ قَوْسَيْنِ لَمْ تُدْرَكْ وَلَمْ تُرَمِ

You journeyed by night, from Sanctuary to Sanctuary
as the full moon travels through the pitch black sky.

That night you ascended till you reached a station
Of Two Bows' Length—one never attained or hoped for!

- Imam Sharaf al-Din al-Busiri

وَاللهُ عَاصِمُهُ ❁ وَجِبْرِيلُ خَادِمُهُ
وَالْبُرَاقُ مَرْكَبُهُ ❁ وَالْمِعْرَاجُ سَفَرُهُ
وَسِدْرَتُ الْمُنْتَهَى مَقَامُهُ
وَقَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ مَطْلُوبُهُ

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